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(54) Abstract Title: **A baby bath unit**

(57) A baby bath unit 1 which is capable of being fitted on the upper rim of a conventional bath 2, the unit having a bowl 3 and a working surface 12 thereby assisting the user to bath and change a baby/infant. The bowl 3 has a funnel end 7 to enable the bath to be located beneath the conventional bath tap outlet and a water drain plug 9. The bath unit may also include a soap dish while the working surface 12 may be attached by hinged means to the bowl allowing the unit to be folded for storage and also include a baby changing mat 14. Preferably the unit may have a moulded rolled edge where it is intended to be supported on the rim of the bath 2.

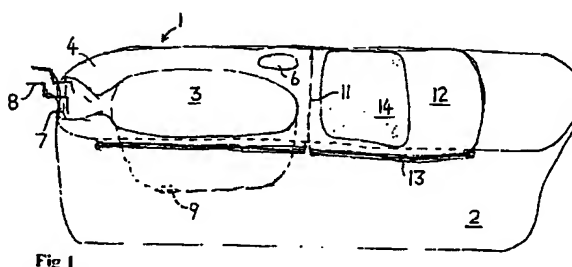


Fig 1

GB 2 388 534 A

The claims were filed later than the filing date but within the period prescribed by Rule 25(1) of the Patents Rules 1995.

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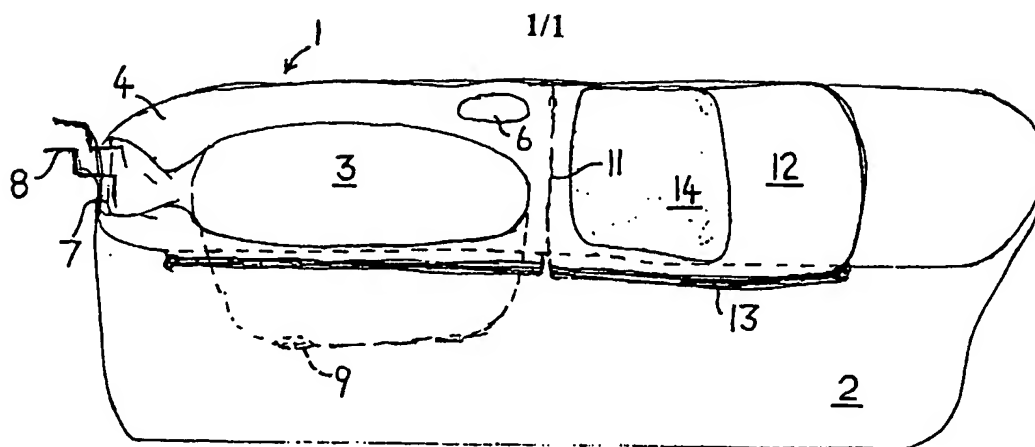


Fig 1

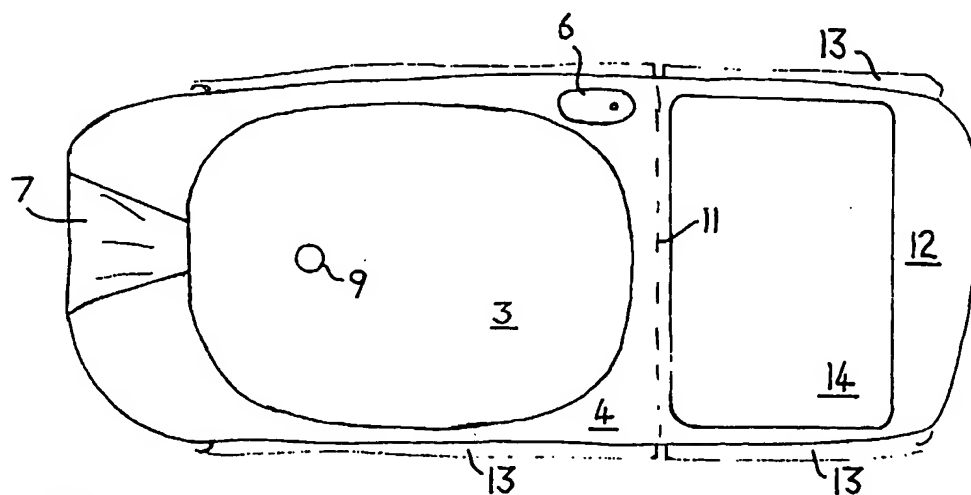


Fig 2

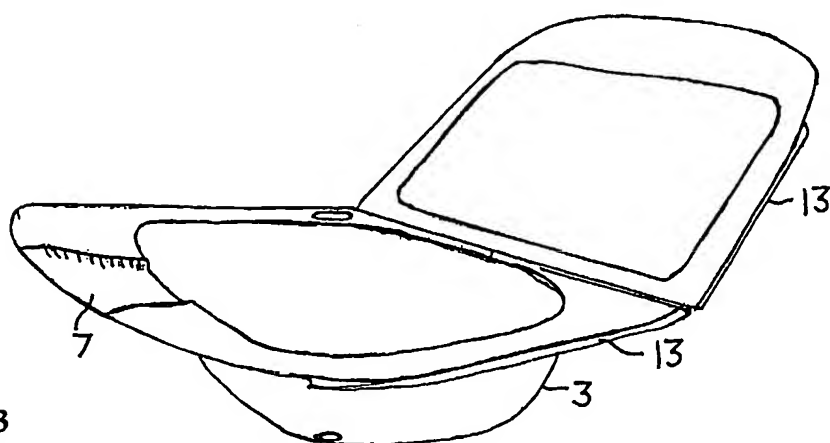


Fig 3

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BABY BATH UNIT

This invention relates to a baby bath unit. It relates particularly to a baby bath which may be filled with water and emptied in a particularly simple manner and which, therefore, makes the task of bathing a baby a comparatively easy operation for the new parent.

The conventional baby bath is a bowl type of container which is generally used by being placed on a table in readiness for filling with water from a domestic hot water system. The water from the usual kitchen or bathroom tap supply is carried by bucket or jug to the bath and after several journeys the bath slowly becomes filled. Because this task is time consuming and messy, there is a tendency to provide a depth of only four or five inches of water in the bath. When sufficient water is judged to be present, the water temperature is checked and the baby is undressed and bathed. After this operation, the baby is taken from the bath, dried and dressed again. The used water is then required to be emptied from the bath and the jugs and buckets will be required again. The whole operation of carrying the water in small volumes to the bath and then using the same small containers to return the water to the waste water drain is laborious. Since these tasks may be carried out every day the total time spent in a week can be more than one hour.

There are already certain baby baths available which are simple bowls which can be supported on the rim of a conventional bath in a bathroom. The usual procedure for using one of these would be:

- a) undress the baby on a changing mat, possibly in the baby's room,
- b) carry the baby wrapped in a towel to the bathroom, at the same time carrying a piece of cottonwool for washing the baby's face,

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c) wash the baby's face with the baby tucked under the parent's arm - this support is necessary because there is normally nowhere else to put the baby other than on the bathroom floor,

d) unwrap the baby, and this may be a difficult task for an inexperienced parent if there is no adjacent work surface,

e) immerse the baby in the water for the bathing operation; if an adjacent work surface was provided, this task could be facilitated because it would be easier to soap a moving slippery baby on a work surface which is out of the water,

f) lift the baby from bath and wrap him/her in a towel in mid-air to enable him to be carried back to the changing mat for dressing. For this task, the floor of the bathroom is often used because a new parent may be afraid of dropping the baby. The use of the floor is not ideal because it may be a draughty place for the baby and the bending required for lifting the baby might eventually cause a back problem for a new mother.

The present invention was devised to provide a more efficient way of delivering water to the bath and then removing the water after use.

According to the invention, there is provided a baby bath unit, the unit having means to support it on the upper rim of a conventional bath, a funnel end capable of being fitted adjacent the water outlet of a bath tap, a drain plug, and a working surface also supportable on the bath upper rim. The working surface may be attached by hinge means to the bath unit. The working surface may include an attached mat which may be provided with a resilient surface cover.

The baby bath unit may include a soap dish. The soap dish may include appropriate drainage holes. The baby bath unit may have a moulded roll edge where it is intended to be supported on the bath upper rim.

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By way of example, a particular embodiment of the invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a side view, partly from above, of the baby bath unit where it has been located on the rim of a conventional bath.

Figure 2 is a plan view of the baby bath unit on its own, and,

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the baby bath unit in a partly folded condition.

As depicted in Figure 1 of the drawings, the baby bath unit 1 is shown as it would be used normally being located on the upper rim of a conventional household bath 2. The baby bath unit 1 comprises a bowl 3 which is mounted on a generally flat surround 4 which extends the full width of the bath and which overlaps the upper rim of the bath 2. The surround 4 includes a depression forming a soap dish 6 and this is provided with a drainage hole.

At a left hand end, the surround 4 carries a funnel 7. The funnel 7 is positioned so as to lie just beneath the bath taps 8 where a water outlet from the taps will be able to deliver a stream of water into the funnel. From the funnel 7, the water will be fed directly into the bowl 3. The bowl 3 additionally includes a removable drain plug 9.

At a right hand end, the surround 4 is provided with a hinge 11 to which a working surface 12 is secured. The working surface 12 is provided with edge means 13 so that it will be able to rest in a stable manner on the upper rim of the bath 2. The working surface 12 carries an attached changing mat 14 which has a waterproof and padded surface. The hinge arrangement for the working surface 12 is such that the surface 12 will be able to be folded over the bowl 3 when the baby bath unit is out of

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use so that the unit will be able to occupy a comparatively small storage space.

Figure 2 is a plan view of the baby bath unit and it will be seen that both the surround 4 and the working surface 12 are provided with the edge means 13 by which the unit may be mounted on the upper rim of the bath 2. The edge means 13 comprises a shaped curve formed from the same material as the working surface and which fits over or rests on the rim of the bath. The edge means 13 is provided along both sides of the unit so that this will be supported in a stable manner on the bath.

Figure 3 shows the baby bath unit in a partly folded condition after it has been removed from the bath. By the folding action, the unit may be returned to a compact condition so that it may be put away until it is next required.

In operation of the baby bath unit, the parent requiring to bath the baby will initially position the unit on the rim of the household bath and ensure that the funnel 7 is located beneath the bath tap water outlet. With the drain plug fitted in the bowl 3, the bath taps will be opened and water will flow into the bowl. When a sufficient depth has been reached and the water temperature has been checked, the baby will be placed on the changing mat 14 of the working surface and undressed. The baby can then be lifted into the water in the bowl 3 and given the bath as usual. After this operation, the baby may be removed from the water and placed again on the mat 14 of the working surface. The baby may then be dried and powdered as usual and provided with its clean clothes. The baby can then be returned to its place in the living room or put to bed. After use of the bath unit, the drain plug 9 may be removed from the bowl 3 and the used water will drain into the body of the bath and be returned automatically to the bath waste water outlet. The working surface 12 may be dried and then folded over the bowl 3. The whole baby bath unit may then be lifted

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from the bath rim and put away until it is next required to be used.

The baby bath unit of the invention has been found to be a useful accessory to assist in the care of a baby because it can be put into use without requiring the lifting and carrying of several volumes of water for filling and emptying the conventional baby bath. The delivery and removal of the water volume is done by making use of the normal bath taps and bath water outlet. The task of bathing the baby is thus made a more simple and a less tiring operation for the parent. In practice, it has been found that when the parent has to fill the ordinary baby bath using buckets and jugs the labour required for this task results in the depth of water being limited to only four or five inches. This depth of water will permit the baby to be only half immersed so that during the washing operation he/she will be getting cold and may be likely to cry. The baby unit of the invention allows water to be added very easily to the bowl so that the parent can choose whatever depth of water is appropriate without increasing the amount of labour needed at the filling stage.

It will be noticed from the drawings, that the bowl 3 part of the baby bath unit is located along the length of the household bath whilst the changing mat 14 is aligned at right angles to this. This arrangement increases the ease of use of the unit. The provision of a working surface at the level of the bath rim increases the convenience of the unit for the parent because otherwise it will be necessary to dry and dress the baby on the bathroom floor. After use of the baby bath unit, this may be put away so it does not interfere with the normal use of the family bath.

The baby bath unit may be made at a comparatively low cost from a moulded plastics material. It can be folded and put away when it is not in use and it can be formed in a light weight construction so that it is easily handled.

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The foregoing description of an embodiment of the invention has been given by way of example only, and a number of modifications may be made without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims. For instance, the surround 4 may be provided with two soap dishes so that the unit may be used equally easily on a bath that has the bath taps located at the left hand end as well as one having the taps at the right end. In addition, the right hand end (Figure 1) of the unit may be provided with a handle so the article may be carried conveniently when it is folded. If necessary, a simple catch can also be provided so that the unit may be secured in the folded condition.

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CLAIMS

- 1 A baby bath unit, the unit having a bowl with means to support it on the upper rim of a conventional bath, a funnel end capable of being fitted adjacent the water outlet of a bath tap, a drain plug, and a working surface also supportable on the bath upper rim.
- 2 A bath unit as claimed in Claim 1, in which the said working surface is attached by hinge means to the bowl part.
- 3 A bath unit as claimed in Claim 1 or 2, in which the said working surface supports a baby changing mat.
- 4 A bath unit as claimed in Claim 3, in which the baby changing mat has a padded surface.
- 5 A bath unit as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 4, in which the bowl part includes a soap dish.
- 6 A bath unit as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 5, in which the unit includes a roll edge capable of supporting the said unit on a bath upper rim.
- 7 A bath unit as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 6, which includes a catch arranged such that the working surface may be secured in a folded condition over the bowl means when the bath unit is out of use.
- 8 A baby bath unit substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to any one Figure of the accompanying drawing.



Application No: GB 0205068.0
 Claims searched: 1 - 8

Examiner: Sally Vaughan
 Date of search: 15 September 2003

Patents Act 1977 : Search Report under Section 17

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance
X	1	GB 2125288 A (VINLAKE) see whole document eg. Fig 1 and page 1 lines 11 - 30
X	1	GB 2121276 A (BOTES) see whole document eg. Fig 3 and page 1 lines 115 - 127
X	1 - 7	US 2614264 (SCHMIDT) see whole document eg. all figures and column 1 lines 45 - column 2 line 15
X	1 - 7	US 1427598 (JACKSON) see whole document eg. all figures, page 1 lines 6 - 17 and lines 68 - 70
X	1 - 7	DE 4327819 A1 (HEINZ), WPI Abstract Accession No. 1994/067004-09
A		GB 2282529 A (QUEST) see whole document eg. Fig 1 & 5
A		GB 1010829 (JONES) see whole document eg. all figures and page 1 lines 47 - 51

Categories:

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
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A4N

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A47K

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report:

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